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Life of Lord Byron.

THERE is not, we feel assured, a single reader of the MIRROR who does not participate in that feeling of regret, which the death of **LORD BYRON** has occasioned. Born rank and affluence, and possessing a genius of the highest order, his Lordship was, by domestic circumstances, driven from his home and family, and has died an alien to the country his talents have so much adorned: for, much as the world may differ as to the motive or tendency of some of his recent works, no person can deny that he was the first poet of his age; and his death, at an early age, and in a distant land, would of itself disarm every ingenuous mind, had he not perished in the most sacred of all causes, that of assisting a brave and oppressed people to shake off the yoke, and to rescue a christian people from the dominion of the infidel Turks.

It has been remarked by the sages of ancient and modern times, that the possession of extraordinary mental endowments, or suddenly and fortuitously acquired honours, are seldom conducive to happiness. Whether this may arise from the high-toned and heart-swelling anticipations which genius usually generates, and experience almost as frequently disappoints; or whether, as some eloquent misanthropists have imagined, there is greater misery than felicity in the lot of human life, and the more an individual is exalted above his fellows, the more his calamities are conspicuous, it remains for time and philosophy to determine. Burns has well observed, that although

"A few seem favourites of fate,
In pleasure's lap carest;
Yet think not all the rich and great
Are likewise truly blest."

And certain it is, that much the greater part of the memoirs of men of genius, and other distinguished characters, presents but too many melancholy proofs that neither the meretricious glittering of popular honour, nor the more esteemed and exalted splendour of intellectual greatness, are calculated to produce to their possessors an unusual portion of human happiness. Perhaps another cause of this lamentable truth may be found in that peculiar pride of soul, which, in the hour of mental or corporeal anguish, scornfully rejects either sympathy or assistance, and rather loves sullenly to brood over its real

or imaginary woes in the savage silence of the desert, than to accept the consolatory support which the philanthropy of society is generally ready to administer. Such was the disposition of the poet who exclaimed,

"O say 'tis madness, call it folly,
You shall not chase my gloom away;
There's such a charm in melancholy,
I would not if I could be gay."

It is, however, very difficult to account for a feeling of this sort, though of its reality there can be no doubt; and we know, from the amazing intensity of feeling which is observable in some of our early inspired poets, from their invocations of the elements of nature to hear and record their sufferings, from that wild and irresistible haughtiness of spirit which frequently works itself into an awful and horrible sublimity, and from that consequent deep and deadly scepticism which casts its ghastly gloominess over the natural and beautiful pictures of the imagination, that the majority of mankind has no reason to complain because providence has not endowed them with those wonderful intellectual powers.

Few individuals, either of a former or the present age, appear more strongly to illustrate these melancholy truths than Lord Byron, who, though born to fortune and to fame, and possessing talents the most brilliant, was subject to a gloominess of thought, and an intense-ness of feeling, which imbibited many an hour in his otherwise cheerful life.

The annals of literature do not furnish a similar instance of extensive literary fame as that of Lord Byron; but, the nearest to it is the history of Pope (whom the noble Lord has so ably vindicated from the attacks of less liberal and less able critics.) Pope was, however, more studiously correct in his compositions, and remarkably musical in the construction of his verse. Byron, on the contrary, was of no pains to polish; and yet his rough and native gems are of the first water, and may often rank with the most matured productions of our best poets.

The distinguishing feature of Lord Byron's poetry is eloquence, and that of the most vehement character. His verse rushes on with the rapidity of a cataract, carrying our ideas impetuously along in such a manner as to prevent any thing

like repose or steady contemplation. Yet, amidst the wild variety of objects and obscure disquisitions which this magical genius contrives to bring together, without any regard to appropriate selection or lucid arrangement, there are descriptions and sentiments of exquisite beauty and tenderness, profusely scattered throughout his poems, all of which show that he was (how painfully, for the first time, we speak of him in the past tense) a perfect master of the art. His character produced his poems, and it cannot be doubted that his poems are adapted to produce such a character. His heroes speak a language supplied not more by imagination than consciousness. They are not those machines, which, by a contrivance of the artist, send forth a music of their own; but, instruments through which he breathed his very soul in tones of agonized sensibility, that cannot but give a sympathetic impulse to those who attend to them. The desolate misanthropy of his mind, rose and threw its dark shade over his poetry like one of his own ruined castles; we feel it to be sublime, and are sometimes lost in admiration unawares.

We have already alluded to the connection between the personal character of Lord Byron and his Poems; and the perusal of his works sufficiently demonstrates the influence of his life over his talents. At every page we recognise the fact in his hero—Lara, Childe Harold, Manfred, and, with some qualification, we might add Don Juan, are all Byron—he lives and breathes in every page.

Lord Byron, like his favourite Pope, has been accused of the grossest plagiarism; and some scribblers, envious of his reputation, have been at the pains of collecting numerous passages from various authors, in prose and verse, to discover parallellisms in the writings of this popular poet. One or two of our literary journals were disgraced with these invidious catalogues, the compilers of which might be compared to the critic in Boccalini's fable,—who having presented to Apollo an immense volume of the errors of great poets, was directed in return to select the grains from a bushel of wheat, after which he received the chaff for his labour. "It deserves to be known," says the author of "*Memoirs of Lord Byron*" (who will not be suspected of any partiality), "that the principal person engaged in this attack upon Lord Byron, was one who had servilely courted his favour, and flattered him in the most fulsome manner; but not meeting with the countenance he expected, he became, as is usually the case, the vengeful calumniator of the man whom he had idolised."

George Gordon, Lord Byron, had not only his own talents, but the pride of illustrious ancestry to boast; for even so early as the conquest his family was distinguished, not merely for their extensive manors in Lancashire and other parts, but for their prowess in arms. When Edward I. was preparing an expedition against the Scots, John de Byron, the representative of the family, was summoned to attend him with his forces, and was afterwards called upon by the same monarch to accompany him in an expedition abroad.

In the feudal ages, the Byrons were always ready with their swords in defence of the sovereign, and seemed proudly to say to the monarch of the time, in the language of their family motto, "Crede Byron." Two of the Byrons fell at the battle of Cressy, purchasing with their own lives a glorious triumph. Another member of the family, Sir John de Byron, rendered good assistance in the battle of Bosworth to the Earl of Richmond, and contributed by his prowess to transfer the crown from the head of Richard III. to that of Henry. This Sir John de Byron was a man of honour as well as a brave warrior; he was very intimate with his neighbour, Sir Gervase Clifton; and although Byron fought under Henry, and Clifton under Richard, it did not diminish the friendship, but on the contrary, put it to a severer test. Previous to the battle, the prize of which was a kingdom, they had promised each other that "if either of them was vanquished, the other should intercede with the conqueror, that the estate of the loser might not be forfeited, but enjoyed by the family." While Clifton was bravely fighting at the head of his troop, he was struck off his horse, which Byron perceiving, he quitted the ranks, and ran to the relief of his friend, whom he shielded; but it was too late, for he died in his arms, on the field of battle. Sir John de Byron was as good as his word; he interceded with the king, the estate was preserved to the Clifton family, and is now in the possession of a descendant of the gallant Sir Gervase.

In the wars between Charles I. and his Parliament, the Byrons adhered to the royal cause. Sir Nicholas Byron, the eldest member and representative of the family, was an eminent loyalist, who having distinguished himself in the wars of the Low Countries, was appointed governor of Chester, in 1642. Lord Clarendon says he was "a soldier of very good command, who, being a person of great affability and dexterity, as well as martial knowledge, gave great life to the designs of the well-affected there; and

with the encouragement of some gentlemen of North Wales, in a short time raised such a power of horse and foot as made often skirmishes with the enemy; sometimes with notable advantage; never with any signal loss."

He had two sons, who both died without issue; and his younger brother, Sir John, became their male heir: this person was made a Knight of the Bath, at the coronation of James I. He had eleven sons, of whom the major part distinguished themselves for their loyalty and gallantry on the side of Charles I. Sir Thomas, a younger son, commanded the Prince of Wales's regiment, at the battle of Hopton-heath; and Lord Clarendon calls him "a gentleman of great courage, and very good conduct, who charged with good execution."

At the battles of Edge-hill and Newbury, the Byrons rendered themselves very conspicuous; and the still more fatal contest at Marston Moor, where seven brothers of the Byrons were engaged: four of them fell in defence of the royal cause.

This circumstance has been feelingly alluded to in a poem written by their illustrious descendant, the late Lord Byron, entitled, an "Adieu to Newstead Abbey,"⁴ the family residence of the Byrons from the year 1540, until within the last few years. In this poem, which was written when his Lordship was only fifteen years of age, he gives such a brief, but animated description of his ancestors, that we shall be excused for introducing it in his memoirs:—

"THROUGH thy battlements, Newstead, the hollow winds whistle;
Thou, the hall of my fathers, art gone to decay;
In thy once smiling garden, the hemlock and thistle
Have choked up the rose which late bloom'd in the way.

Of the mail-cover'd barons, who proudly to battle
Led their vassals from Europe to Palestine's plain,
The escutcheon, and shield, which with every
blast rattle,
Are the only sad vestiges now that remain.

No more doth old Robert, with harp-stringing numbers,
Raise a flame in the breast for the war-laurel'd wreath;
Near Asketon's towers, John of Horistan's slumbers,
Unnerved is the hand of his minstrel by death.

Paul and Hubert too sleep in the valley of Cressy;
For the safety of Edward and England they fell;
My fathers, the tears of your country redress ye;
How you fought, how you died! still heranials can tell.

⁴ For an engraved view and description of Newstead Abbey, see the *Mirror*, No. 67.

⁵ Horistan Castle, in Derbyshire, an ancient seat of the Byron family.

On Marston⁶ with Rupert[†] 'gainst traitors contending,
Four brothers enrich'd with their blood the bleak field,
For the rights of a monarch, their country defending,
Till death their attachment to royalty seal'd.

Shades of heroes, farewell! your descendant, departing
From the seat of his ancestors, bids you adieu!
Abroad, or at home, your remembrance imparting
New courage, he'll think upon glory and you.

Though a tear dim his eye at this sad separation,
'Tis nature, not fear, that excites his regret;
Far distant he goes, with the same emulation
The fame of his fathers he never can forget.

That fame, and that memory, still will be cherish;
He vows that he never will disgrace your renown;
Like you will he live, or like you will he perish;
When decay'd, may he mingle his dust with your own."

Sir John Byron, one of the survivors in that dreadful day, fatal alike to his family and the cause they espoused, was appointed to many important commands, and occupies a conspicuous figure in the pages of Lord Clarendon. "In truth," says this noble historian, "there was no gentleman in the kingdom of a better reputation among all sorts of men." On his appointment to the Lieutenancy of the Tower of London, the opponents of the court remonstrated; and the king answered, that "he did not expect, having preferred a person of known fortune and unquestionable reputation to that trust, he should have been pressed to remove him without any particular charge;" but afterwards, when Sir John himself desired to "be freed from the agony and vexation of that place," his majesty consented to the alteration.

He was created Lord Byron, Oct. 24, 1643, with a collateral remainder to his brothers, and after various honourable services, he was, on the decline of the king's affairs, appointed governor to the Duke of York; in this office he died in France, in 1652, without issue, when his brother Richard, who was knighted by Charles I. and had a command at the battle of Edgehill, became second Lord Byron. He was governor of Appley-castle, and also distinguished himself in the government of Newark. He died 1679, aged 74, and it is recorded on his tomb, in the church of Hucknall-Tokard, that, "with the rest of his family, being seven brothers, he faithfully served King Charles I. in the civil wars," and that they "suffered much for their loyalty, and lost all their fortunes; yet it pleased God so to bless the

⁶ The battle of Marston Moor, where the adherents of Charles I. were defeated.

[†] Son of the Elector Palatine, and related to Charles I. He afterwards commanded the fleet in the reign of Charles II.

honest endeavours of the said Richard, Lord Byron, that he re-purchased part of their ancient inheritance, which he left to his posterity, with a laudable memory for great piety and charity." This second Lord Byron was succeeded by his eldest son, William, who married Elizabeth, the daughter of John Viscount Chaworth, of the kingdom of Ireland, by whom he had five sons, all of whom died young, except William, whose eldest son, William, succeeded him to the title in the year, 1736.

A melancholy and unfortunate event, in which this nobleman was too fatally concerned, and which is already but too well known, induced him strictly to seclude himself from public notice; so that, beyond the boundaries of his domestic circle, his title, his estate, nay, even his existence, seemed to be entirely swallowed in the deep waves of black oblivion. The remembrance of this sorrowful circumstance is supposed to have had considerable influence at times on the mind of his late Lordship, and that it has cast its bleak shade, not only over many passages in his poems, but has tinged with its melancholy hue many of the scenes in which his moody and misanthropic imagination has been the chief actor. On the maternal side, the ancestry of Lord Byron is also very ancient and illustrious; his mother, from whom he derived the name of Gordon, having been the last branch of that noble family which descended from the union of the Princess Jane Stuart, daughter of James II. king of Scotland, with the Earl of Huntly.

The last Lord Byron, but one, had only one son, who held a commission in the army, and was killed in Corsica several years before the death of his father, which added not a little to the gloominess of the noble recluse, and accelerated the succession of his present Lordship, as the infant grandson of the celebrated Admiral Byron, who was the eldest brother of the late Lord. This nobleman died on the 19th of May, 1791, by which means our hero became entitled to the title and estates of his illustrious ancestry. His Lordship's father married first the Baroness Conyers, daughter of Lord Holderness, by whom he had a daughter; and after her demise the lady already alluded to, Miss Gordon, of Gight, the mother of the noble Lord.

His Lordship spent a considerable portion of his early life in Scotland, where it is supposed the wild and mountainous scenes which surrounded him, contributed not a little to elicit and strengthen the mighty energies of his mind, and to imprint on his vivid imagination those powerful and beautiful images of natural grandeur and wildness which are so observable in

the whole of his writings. At times, his Lordship would exclude himself from his ordinary companions, and wander alone amidst the majestic and sublime scenery of the highlands, until his soul seemed tinged with those elements of real sublimity, and drank a species of inspiration from the mists of the mountains, the wild waves of the ocean, and the black abdant of its terrific boundaries.

The celebrated school at Harrow, and the University of Cambridge, had the honour of adding the polish of education to the innate powers of his mind, and several of his academic companions can relate not a few instances of the precocious talents and strange eccentricities, which even then characterised his Lordship. At this early period of his life he made many voluntary excursions to the Aonian Hill, and drank pretty largely of the Castalian stream, which, the work he published under the title of *Hours of Idleness, a Series of Poems, original and translated*, sufficiently proves; yet, premature as these poetic attempts might be considered, and notwithstanding the severity with which the great "Northern Luminary," the Editor of the Edinburgh Review, thought proper to handle them, there are numerous original beauties in many of the pieces, which those, whom a continuance of carping criticism has not blinded to the early glimmerings of genius, would nominate the probable harbingers of the splendid galaxy that succeeded them.

These poems were published at Newark in 1807, when his Lordship was nineteen years of age; and from the dates prefixed, it appears that the majority were written between his sixteenth and eighteenth year. This circumstance the reviewers thought proper to comment upon in very harsh and unbecoming language. They commence their critique by saying, "The poesy of this young Lord belongs to that class which neither gods nor men are said to permit. Indeed, we do not recollect to have seen a quantity of verse with so few deviations in either direction from that exact standard. His effusions are spread over a dead flat, and can no more get above or below the level, than if they were so much stagnant water." As an extenuation of this offence, the noble author is peculiarly forward in pleading minority. We have it in the title-page, and on the very back of the volume; it follows his name like a favourite part of his *style*. Much stress is laid upon it in the preface, and the poems are connected with this general statement of his case, by particular dates, substantiating the age at which each was written. Now, the law upon the point of minority, we hold

to be perfectly clear. It is a plea available only to the defendant; no plaintiff can offer it as a supplementary ground of action. Thus, if any suit could be brought against Lord Byron, for the purpose of compelling him to put into court a certain quantity of poetry; and if judgment were given against him, it is highly probable that an exception would be taken, were he to deliver *for poetry*, the contents of this volume. To this he might plead *minority*; but, as he now makes voluntary tender of the article, he hath no right to sue, on that ground, for the price in good current praise, should the goods be unmarketable. This is our view of the law on the point, and we dare say so will it be ruled. Perhaps, however, in reality, all that he tells us about his youth, is rather with a view to increase our wonder than to soften our censures. He possibly means to say, ‘See how a minor can write! This poem was actually composed by a young man of eighteen, and this by one only of sixteen!’—But, alas, we all remember the poetry of Cowley at ten, and Pope at twelve! and so far from hearing, with any degree of surprise, that very poor verses were written by a youth from his leaving school to his leaving college, inclusive, we really believe this to be the most common of all occurrences; that it happens in the life of nine men in ten who are educated in England; and that the tenth man writes better verse than Lord Byron.”

How far this spirit of prophetic criticism has been verified, the public are already pretty well acquainted; and were it not for the influence which it had upon his Lordship’s future conduct, and to display the sudden transition from severity to adulation, from gall to honey, on the part of his unmerciful castigators, we should not have distended our pages with these extracts.

This critique elicited from his Lordship’s pen one of the bitterest and most powerful satires ever published; a satire in which his Lordship attacks the Reviewers and the Review in general terms, as will be seen by the following extracts:—

“ To these young tyrants, by themselves mis-placed,
Combined usurpers on the throne of Taste;
To these when authors bend in humble awe,
And hail their voices as truth, their word as Law;
While these are Censors, ‘would be sin to spare;
While such are Critics, why should I forbear?
But yet so near all modern worthies run,
‘Tis doubtful whom to seek, or whom to shun;
Nor know we when to spare, or where to strike,
Our Bards and Censors are so much alike.

“ Yet say! why should the Bard at once resign
His claim to favour from the sacred Nine?
For ever startled by the mingled howl
Of Northern wolves that still in darkness prowl:

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A coward brood which mangle as they prey:
By hellish instinct, all that cross their way:
Aged or young, the living or the dead,
No mercy find,—these harpies must be fed,
Why do the injured, unresisting yield
The calm possession of their native field?
Why tamely thus before their fangs retreat,
Nor hunt the bloodhounds back to Arthur’s seat?”

Not content, however, with these general attacks, his Lordship personally satirized some of the most popular poets of the day. As the poetic animadversions on several of these writers are eminently conspicuous for felicity of language, and severity of point, no apology is necessary for making a few quotations from the best of them:—

SOUTHEY.

“ But if, in spite of all the world can say,
Thou still wilt vereward plod thy weary way;
If still in Berkeley Ballads most uncivil,
Thou wilt devote old women to the devil,
The babe unborn thy dread intent may rue:
‘God help thee,’ Southey, and thy readers too.”

WORDSWORTH.

“ Thus when he tells the tale of Betty Foy,
The idiot mother of ‘an idiot Boy’:—
A moon-struck silly lad who lost his way,
And, like his bard, confounded night with day,
So close on each pathetic part he dwells,
And each adventure so sublimely tells,
That all who view the ‘idiot in his glory,’
Conceive the Bard the hero of the story.”

COLERIDGE.

“ If inspiration should her aid refuse
To him who takes a Pixy for a Muse,
Yet none in lofty numbers can surpass
The Bard who soars to elezize an ass.
How well the subject suits his noble mind!
‘A fellow-feeling makes us wondrous kind!’”

His Lordship’s pen, however, was not entirely dipped in gall; on the contrary, there are many very beautiful lines eulogizing the productions of Mearns, Gifford, Kirke White, Sotheby, Macneil, Crabbe, Shee, Rogers, and Campbell.

Lord Byron declares towards the termination of the poem, that it was his intention to close, from that period, his newly-formed connexion with the Muses, and that should he return in safety from the “Minarets” of Constantinople, the “Maidens of Georgia,” and the “sublime snows” of Mount Caucasus, nothing on earth should tempt him to resume the pen.

Happily for the republic of letters this resolution was not preserved; and the noble Bard, with that generosity which usually accompanies true genius, has not only forgiven Mr. Jeffrey, the Editor of the Edinburgh Review, but thus flatteringly alludes to him in one of his poems:—

“ And all our little feuds, at least, all mine,
Dear Jeffrey, once my most redoubtless foe,
(As far as rhyme and criticism combine
To make such puppets of us things below.)

Are over; here’s a health ‘to Auld Lang Syne.’
I do not know you, and may never know
Your face—but you have acted on the whole
Most nobly, and I own it from my soul.”

THE MIRROR.

And when I use the phrase of "Auld Lang Syne,"
 'Tis not addressed to you—the more's the pity
 For me, I would rather take my wine
 With you, than aught, (save Scott,) in your
 proud city:

But, somehow, it may seem a school-boy's whine,
 And yet I seek not to be grand nor witty,
 But I am half a Scot by birth, and bred
 A whole one, and my heart flies to my head."

This is not the only instance in which Lord Byron exhibits his attachment to Scotland. His remembrances of the scenes of his childhood are recorded in an early poem on *Loch na Garr*, a mountain which he describes as "one of the most sublime and picturesque amongst our Caledonian Alps." Though the verses were among his earliest poetical efforts they have much poetical force, and are by no means devoid of harmony, as may be seen from the following extract:—

"Ah! there my young footstep in infancy wan-
 der'd,
 My cap was the bonnet, my cloak was the
 plaid;
 On Chieftain's long perish'd my memory pon-
 der'd.
 As daily I strode through the pine-covered
 glade:
 I sought not my home till the day's dying glory
 Gave place to the rays of the bright polar
 star,
 For fancy was cheer'd by traditional story,
 Disclosed by the natives of dark Loch na
 Garr."

Among the early amusements of his Lordship, were swimming and managing a boat, in both of which he is said to have acquired a great dexterity even in his childhood. In his aquatic excursions near Newstead Abbey, he had seldom any other companion than a large Newfoundland dog, to try whose assagacity and fidelity, he would sometimes fall out of the boat, as if by accident, when the dog would seize him and drag him ashore. On losing this dog, in the autumn of 1808, his Lordship caused a monument to be erected, commemorative of its attachment, with an inscription, from which we extract the following lines:—

"We who, perchance, behold this simple urn
 Pass on—it honours none you wish to mourn!
 To mark a friend's remains these stones arise—
 I never knew but one, and here he lies."

His Lordship, when very young, was placed under the guardianship of Mr. Wh—te, an eminent solicitor, who, by a singular coincidence of circumstances, had likewise become the guardian of the accomplished Miss Ch—worth, whose father had formerly fallen a victim to the deadly resentment of a very near relative of his Lordship.

To this lady, notwithstanding the family feud, it was the wish of their guardian, Lord Byron should be united; and there are pretty strong grounds for supposing that the inclinations of his

Lordship were not at variance with the intentions of his guardian. The lady, however, from family circumstances, and perhaps still more from an early-formed attachment to J. M—sters, Esq. then honoured, from his fashionable notoriety, with the more familiar appellation of "the gay Jack M—sters," was far from being a willing ward. His Lordship's pride would not suffer him to woo a reluctant fair one in *propria persona*, yet he expressed the warmth of his feelings very frequently in his invocations of the Muses.

Mr. M—sters was a pretty constant attendant upon Miss C—th, and for the purpose of avoiding him, Mr. Wh—te, his two sisters, Lord Byron, and the unwilling fair, were dragged in rapid succession from one watering-place to another throughout the country, while he followed in pursuit. They first went to Buxton, thence to Matlock, and from there, much against the will of Miss C—th, they fled at his approach. At these places our noble hero entered with great cordiality into all the fashionable amusements of the time; and though he affected a wish not to be known, he was generally distinguished by the hilarity of his heart, the urbanity of his manners, and the buoyancy of his animal spirits and intellectual powers. His Lordship, however, was well known to be for one very fashionable and very frequent amusement naturally unfit; hence he always expressed, if not by language, yet by strong unequivocal symptoms, an utter abhorrence to dancing. In other respects he promoted every thing conducive to the conviviality of the company. One morning a party who were at the New Bath came somewhat later than usual to breakfast, and requested some tongue. They were told that his Lordship had eaten it all. "I am very angry with his Lordship," said a lady, loud enough for him to hear the observation. "I am sorry for it, madam," retorted Lord Byron, "but before I ate the tongue I was assured that you did not want it." A retort by no means gallant.

It was useless, however, contending with destiny. His Lordship's fate was not to be united with that of Miss C—th, notwithstanding the ardency of his attachment, and the influence of their guardian.

In the course of this amour, and particularly towards its termination, Lord Byron addressed some beautiful lines to the fair, wayward object of his affections. Many of those amatory *morceaux* display considerable poetical excellence, mingled with much richness and tenderness of

feeling. The following stanzas are taken from *Hours of Idleness*, and although they are not clothed in that glittering imagery of language and imagery with which his Lordship's subsequent pieces are adorned, we think they display much of talent, and we know they contain much of truth :—

" Oh ! had my fate been joined with thine,
As once this pledge appeared a token ;
These follies had not, then, been mine.
For then, my peace had not been broken."

" To thee, these early faults I owe,
To thee, the wise and old reproofing ;
They knew my sins, but do not know
Twas thine to break the bonds of loving.

" For, once my soul, like thine was pure,
And all its rising fires could smother ;
But now, thy vows no more endure,
Besow'd by thee upon another.

" Perhaps, his peace I could destroy,
And spoil the blisses that await him ;
Yet, let my rival smile in joy,
For thy dear sake I cannot hate him.

" Ah ! since thy angel form is gone,
My heart no more can rest with any ;
But what is sought in thee alone
Attempts, alas ! to find in many.

" Then fare thee well, deceitful maid,
'Twere vain and fruitless to regret thee ;
Nor hope, nor memory yield their aid,
But pride may teach me to forget thee.

" Yet all this giddy waste of years,
This tiresome round of palling pleasures ;
These varied loves, these matron's fears,
These thoughtless strains to passion's measures.

" If thou wert mine, had all tee a bush'd ;
This cheek now pale from early riot,
With passion's hectic ne'er had flush'd,
But bloom'd in calm domestic quiet.

" Yes, once the rural scene was sweet,
For Nature seem'd to smile before thee ;
And once my breast abhor'd deceit,
For then it beat but to adore thee.

" But, now, I seek for other joys ;
To think, would drive my soul to madness ;
In thoughtless狂s, and empty noise,
I conquer half my bosom's sadness.

" Yet even in these, a thought will steal,
In spite of every vain endeavour ;
And finds might pity what I feel,
To know, that thou art lost for ever."

The anguish produced by unrequited love and disappointed ambition on a mind like his Lordship's, may be more easily conceived than described :—fits of gloominess and gaiety, desperation and dissipation, alternately prevailed in rapid succession, until the Muses, the invincible confidants of intense passion, gently soothed the irritation of his heart, by presenting to his over-credulous imagination a bright perspective of poetical honours and perennial triumphs. He shortly afterwards published his Minor Poems. Their fate and its consequences, in a literary point of view, have been already described. This last and long-cherished hope was apparently blasted for ever, and he could no longer look for consolation, under the extreme anguish of

his feelings, to literary glory. The irrevocable decree which successively destroyed his enraptured anticipations of love and fame, drove him to the verge of madness, his mind and conduct were entirely metamorphosed, naturally mirthful, he became suddenly melancholy ; he shunned, despised, and hated every one ; the sulkiness of his disposition was converted into the gall of misanthropy ; and the conflicting passions, which like vultures preyed upon the tenderest fibres of his heart, goaded him to a determination to quit the scenes where circumstances and associations only served to awaken recollections which harrowed and tortured his soul to madness.

On arriving at the age of manhood, Lord Byron took a long leave of his native country, in the view of making a tour in foreign lands, but as the ordinary course of travelling through Europe, was then impeded by the war which prevailed between England and France, he embarked at Falmouth for Lisbon. In 1800, he passed through Portugal and Spain, touched at Malta and Sicily, and proceeded to the Morea and Constantinople, during part of which tour he was accompanied by Mr. John Cam Hobhouse, the present colleague of Sir Francis Burdett in the representation of Westminster. He was not of that class of travellers who go to learn, and his statements of fact are not always to be relied on, as they take the hue of his imagination, oftentimes brilliant and lively, sometimes spleenetic and froward, but generally forcible and striking. A gentleman, at the request of a friend, furnished his Lordship with introductory letters to the principal persons at Malta. He presented the letters, and was waited on in return by the individuals to whom they were addressed ; but he refused their invitations, shut himself up during the greater part of his stay there, and of course had little, if any opportunity of knowing any thing about the country or its inhabitants. Nevertheless, he presumes to say, "the crime of *assassination* is not confined to Portugal. In Sicily and Malta we are knocked on the head at a handsome average nightly ; and not a Sicilian or Maltese is ever punished." Nothing can be more erroneous as regards Malta, and we are assured by a gentleman who resided there for four years, shortly previous to Lord Byron's visit, that out of a population of nearly 100,000 natives, with a garrison of 3 or 4,000 soldiers, and a harbour constantly frequented by great numbers of foreigners, only two persons were killed in all that time ; one by a robber who broke into a house to plunder it, and the other in

a drunken quarrel, in which he probably was the aggressor ; and on both occasions the police displayed the most laudable activity in endeavouring to bring the offenders to justice. The Maltese, whatever they may be now, were certainly at that time as little given to assassination as any nation in Europe.

In like manner Lord Byron characterised the Portuguese as a cowardly race—

" Well doth the Spanish hind the difference know
Twixt him and Lusian slave, the lowest of the low."

After the battle of Busaco, the glorious campaign of 1810, and the expulsion of Massena's army from Lisbon, his Lordship found he was mistaken ; and his apology was curious. " As I found the Portuguese, so I have characterised them. That they are since improved, at least in courage, is evident."

It is somewhat singular that his Lordship should have then had a narrow escape from a fever in the vicinity of the place where he has just ended his life, and when he experienced the fidelity of the Albanians:

" When, in 1810," he says, " after the departure of my friend, Mr. Hobhouse, for England, I was seized with a severe fever in the Morea; these men (Albanians) saved my life, by frightening away my physician, whose throat they threatened to cut, if I was not cured within a given time. To this consolatory assurance of posthumous retribution, and a resolute refusal of Dr. Romanelli's prescriptions, I attribute my recovery. I had left my last remaining English servant at Athens; my dragoon, or interpreter, was as ill as myself, and my poor amanuents nursed me with an attention which would have done honour to civilization."

While the Salsette frigate, in which Lord Byron was a passenger to Constantinople, lay in the Dardanelles, a discourse arose among some of the officers respecting the practicability of swimming across the Hellespont.—Lord Byron and Lieutenant Ekenhead agreed to make the trial ; they accordingly attempted this enterprise on the 3rd of May, 1810. The following is the account given of it by his Lordship:—

" The whole distance from Abydos, the place from whence we started, to our landing at Seatos on the other side, including the length we were carried by the current, was computed by those on board the frigate at upwards of four English miles ; though the actual breadth is barely one. The rapidity of the current is such, that no boat can row directly

across ; and it may in some measure be estimated, from the circumstance of the whole distance being accomplished, by one of the parties in an hour and five, and by the other, in an hour and ten minutes. The water was extremely cold, from the melting of the mountain snows. About three weeks before, we had made an attempt ; but having ridden all the way from the Troad the same morning, and the water being of an icy chillness, we found it necessary to postpone the completion till the frigate anchored below the castles, when we swam the Straits, as just stated, entering a considerable way above the European, and landing below the Asiatic, fort. Chevalier says, that a young Jew swam the same distance for his mistress ; and Olivier mentions its having been done by a Neapolitan ; but our Consul at Tarragona remembered neither of those circumstances, and tried to dissuade us from the attempt. A number of the Salsette's crew were known to have accomplished a greater distance ; and the only thing that surprised me was, that as doubts had been entertained of the truth of Leander's story, no traveller had endeavoured to ascertain its practicability."

The result of this notable adventure Lord Byron recorded in some lively lines, comparing himself with Leander, and concluding thus :—

" 'Twere hard to say who fared the best;
Sad mortals, thus the Gods still plague you !
He lost his labour, I my jest;
For he was drown'd, and I've theague."

When Lord Byron and his company visited Athens, they were greatly mortified, and thoroughly indignant, to see the place dismantled of many of the beauties which had rendered the spot, even in its dilapidated state, sacred in the estimation of all travellers who possessed any reverence for the genius of antiquity. But the ravages of time, and those committed by barbarians, bore no comparison to the extent of the spoliation recently perpetrated in the name, and by the orders of an English ambassador at the Porte, who had exerted his influence so effectually as almost to demolish several of the finest of the temples that were then remaining. After this it was too much in the spirit of Erostratus for the same nobleman to cause his own name, together with that of his wife, to be inscribed on a pillar of the temple of Minerva. This extraordinary mark of vanity, however, was actually executed in a very conspicuous manner, and deeply engraved in the marble, at a considerable elevation. Lord Byron, on beholding this inscription, was so much hurt, and conceived such an abhorrence

of this presumption, which he considered as almost amounting to sacrilege, that with great labour, and difficulty, he got himself raised up to the requisite height, and obliterated the name of the Earl, but gallantly left that of the lady untouched. Besides this act of zeal, he adopted another and severer method of humiliating the pride of his brother peer; for, on the west side of the same temple, he caused the following monkish lines to be very deeply cut, in large characters:—

"Quod non fecerunt Goti,
Hoc fecerunt Scotti."

But, the resentment of Lord Byron was not limited to mere localities. He invoked his powerful muse on the occasion, and, as if he had been actually inspired by the genius of the place, he wrote a poem, the opening part of which, constitutes the introduction to the second canto of *Childe Harold*, but the remainder was suppressed as being too caustic for publication. The public has not, however, lost his Lordship's opinions on this subject, for in his short poem of the *Curse of Minerva*, he has been very severe on the conduct of the Earl of Elgin, in despoiling the Parthenon during his embassy to the Ottoman Porte. Minerva is described as recounting the spoliation of Athens by various hands, and particularly Lord Elgin, whom the goddess thus denounces:—

"Mortal! (the blue-eyed maid resumed once more)
Bear back my mandate to thy native shore;
Though fallen, alas! this vengeance yet is mine,
To turn my counsels far from lands like thine.
Hear, then, in silence, Pallas' stern behest,
Hear, and believe, for time will tell the rest:
First on the head of him who did the deed
My curse shall light, on him and all his seed;
Without one spark of intellectual fire,
Be all his sons as senseless as their sire:
If one with wit the parent-breed disgrace,
Believe him bastard of a better race;
Still with his hireling Artists let him prize,
And folly's praise repay for wisdom's hate.
Long of her Patron's *gusto* let them tell,
Whose noblest native *genio*—is to sell:
To sell, and make (may shame record the day)
The State receiver of his piffer'd prey!"

* * * * *

And last of all, amidst the gaping crew,
Some calm spectator, as he takes his view
In silent admiration, mix'd with grief,
Admires the plunderer, but abhors the thief:
Loathed in life, scarce pardoned in the dust,
May hate pursue his sacrilegious lust;
Link'd with the fool who fired th' Ephesian dome,
Shall vengeance follow far beyond the tomb.
Erostratus and * * * * ever shall shine
In many a branding page and burning line.
Alike condemn'd for aye to stand accursed,
Perchance the second viler than the first,
So let him stand, through ages yet unborn,
Fix'd statue on the pedestal of scorn!"

In 1811, Lord Byron's mother died, and he regretted her loss in terms of filial affection, though some of the daily papers have asserted that Donna Inez in his

poem of *Don Juan* was intended as a portrait of his mother, than which nothing can be more erroneous. Lord Byron always spoke of his mother in terms of affection. "In the short space of one month," says he, "I have lost her who gave me being, and most of those who had made that being tolerable. To me the lines of Young are no fiction:—"

"The shaft flew thrice, and thrice my peace was
lain, &c."

The other two individuals alluded to, were a Mr. Matthews of Cambridge, and the Hon. J. W. of the Guards. Of the latter he speaks thus feelingly:—

"Oh, known the earliest, and esteem'd the most!
Dear to a heart where nought was left so dear!
Though to my hopeless days for ever lost,
In dreams deny me not to see thee here!
And morn in secret shall renew the tear
Of consciousness awaking to her woes,
And fancy hover o'er thy bloodless bier,
Till my frail frame return to whence it rose,
And mourn'd and mourner lie united in repose."

After an absence of nearly three years, Lord Byron revisited his native shores, and exhibited the advantages of travelling in his "*Childe Harold*," the plan of which was laid in Albania and prosecuted at Athens, where it received some of its finest touches and most splendid ornaments. The hint of adapting the style and stanza of Spenser to a journal of travels and opinions, was taken from an observation of Dr. Beattie, on which Lord Byron formed the plan of giving to the world a poetical history of his observations in foreign lands. The way in which the appearance of the poem of *Childe Harold* was greeted by the Edinburgh Reviewers is amusing. "Lord Byron has improved marvellously," said they, "since his last appearance at our tribunal; and this, though it bear a very affected title, is really a volume of very considerable power."

It soon appeared that his Lordship had a great facility of writing. He published in rapid succession the *Giaour*, the *Bride of Abydos*, and the *Corsair*, the first inscribed to Mr. Rogers, the second to Lord Holland, and the third to Mr. Thomas Moore. The spirit and brilliancy of all these poems were great. In the dedication of the "*Corsair*," he said it was the last production with which he should trespass on public patience for some years—a sort of promise which poets are not much expected to keep, and are easily excused for breaking. This dedication so highly flattering to the talents of Mr. Moore, was as follows:—

"My dear Moore—I dedicate to you the last production with which I shall trespass on public patience, and your indulgence, for some years; and I own

that I feel anxious to avail myself of this latest and only opportunity of adorning my pages with a name, consecrated by unshaken public principle, and the most undoubted and various talents. While Ireland ranks you among the firmest of her patriots; while you stand alone the first of her bards in her estimation, and Britain ratifies and confirms the decree, permit me, whose only regret, since our first acquaintance, has been the years he had lost before it commenced, to add the humble, but sincere suffrage of friendship, to the voice of more than one nation."

On the 2nd of January, 1815, Lord Byron married, at Seham, in the county of Durham, the only daughter of Sir Ralph Milbank Noel, Baronet, and towards the close of the same year, his Lady brought him a daughter, for whom he always manifested the strongest affection. Within a few weeks, however, after that event, a separation took place, for which various causes have been stated. This difference excited a prodigious sensation at the time, and was the last stab to the happiness of his Lordship. We would not aggravate the feelings of a widowed mother, but justice to the memory of the noble bard compels us to express our conviction, that the separation on his part was involuntary, and although he vented his spleen in some angry verses, yet how deeply he loved Lady Byron will be seen from the following stanzas, which he addressed to her a few months before their separation:

TO JESSY.

" THERE is a mystic thread of life
So dearly wreathed with mine alone,
That Destiny's relentless knife
At once must sever both or none.

There is a form on which these eyes
Have often gazed with fond delight;
By day that form their joy supplies,
And dreams restore it through the night.

There's a voice whose tones inspire
Such thrills of rapture through my breast;
I would not hear a scrapp choir,
Unless that voice could join the rest.

There is a face whose blushes tell
Affection's tale upon the cheek;
But pallid at one fond farewell,
Proclaims more love than words can speak.

There is a lip which mine hath prest,
And none had ever prest before;
It vowed to make me sweetly blest;
And mine, mine only prest it more.

There is a bosom—all my own—
Hath pillow'd off this aching head;
A mouth which smiles on me alone,
An eye whose tears with mine are shed.

There are two hearts whose movements thrill
In unison so closely sweet!
That pulse to pulse, responsive still,
That both must heave—or cease to beat.

There are two souls whose equal flow,
In gentle streams so calmly run,
That when they part—they part!—ah, no!
They cannot part—*those souls are one.*"

Within a few weeks, however, after the separation took place, Lord Byron suddenly left the kingdom with the resolution never to return.

He crossed over to France, through which he passed rapidly to Brussels, taking in his way a survey of the field of Waterloo. He proceeded to Coblenz, and thence up the Rhine as far as Basle. After visiting some of the most remarkable scenes in Switzerland, he proceeded to the North of Italy.—He took up his abode for some time at Venice, where he was joined by Mr. Hobhouse, who accompanied him in an excursion to Rome, where he completed his *Childe Harold*.

During the residence of Lord Byron at Venice, the house of a shoemaker was destroyed by fire; and every article belonging to the poor man being lost, he was, with a large family, reduced to a most pitiable condition. The noble bard having ascertained the afflicting circumstances of this event, ordered a new and superior habitation to be immediately built for the sufferer; in addition to which he presented the unfortunate tradesman with a sum equal in value to the whole of his lost stock in trade and furniture.

Another trait of his Lordship's urbanity and beneficence may here be related:

Previous to his Lordship's marriage, when he resided in the Albany, a young lady of poetical talent, but not successful in her literary attempts, found herself involved in difficulties, owing to the misfortunes of her family. Those friends who might have served her were abroad, and she knew not where to address them; her distresses accumulated, and she felt so severely the state of those who were most dear to her, that she resolved to apply to Lord Byron, on the plea of authorship, by soliciting his subscription to her poems. It is singular, that her idea of his character was formed from his works, the perusal of which made her conclude him of an amiable disposition, and one who was much misunderstood by the world. Such as her imagination had portrayed him, she found him in reality. She simply stated her motive for applying to him, and requested his subscription; when he, in the most delicate manner, prevented her from dwelling on any painful subject, by immediately entering into some general conversation, in the course of which he wrote a draft, which he folded up and presented to her, saying, "that was his subscription." She did not, of course, look at the paper while she remained with him, which was some

time, as the pleasure of his discourse was too delightful to be soon relinquished, and, while he professed himself highly interested in her future welfare, from motives of delicacy, he refrained from taking any active part in promoting the subscription; for, as they were both young, he feared, from the well-known censoriousness of the world, he might rather injure than serve her by so doing. On her leaving him, she inspected the paper, and found it to be a draft on his banker for fifty pounds.

This is but one of the many generous acts which Lord Byron has done, both in his own county and since his voluntary exile from it, although he has never assumed the ostentatious character of a philanthropist.

His Lordship resided for some time at Pisa; and during his stay in Italy wrote numerous poetical productions, including his *Don Juan*, *Beppo*, *Mazeppa*, three or four tragedies, and, in conjunction with Mr. Percy Bysshe Shelley, and Mr. Leigh Hunt, commenced the *Liberal* to which he contributed some papers.

In most of his poems Lord Byron displays the most fond and ardent attachment to Greece, whose fate he thus beautifully describes in one of his poems:—

THE isles of Greece, the isles of Greece !
Where burning Sappho loved and sung,
Where grew the arts of war and peace.—
Where Delos rose, and Phœbus sprung !
Eternal summer gilds them yet,
But all, except their sun, is set.

The Scian and the Teian muse,
The hero's harp, the lover's lute,
Have found the same your shores refuse ;
Their place of birth alone is mute
To sounds which echo further west.
Than your skies— Islands of the Blest.

The mountains look on Marathon—
And Marathon looks on the sea ;
And musing there an hour alone,
I dream'd that Greece might still be free ;
For standing on the Persian's grave,
I could not deem myself a slave.

A king sat on the rocky brow
Which looks o'er sea-born Salamis ;
And ships, by thousands, lay below,
And men in nations—all were his !
He counted them at break of day—
And when the sun set where were they ?

And where are they ? and where art thou,
My country ? On thy voiceless shore
The heroic lay is tuneless now—
The heroic bosom beats no more !
And must thy lyre, so long divine,
Degenerate into hands like mine ?

'Tis something in the dearth of fame,
Though link'd among a fetter'd race,
To feel at least a patriot's shame,
Even as I sing, suffice my face ;
For what is left the poet here ?
For Greeks a blush—for Greece a tear.

The poetry of the three concluding stanzas is not less exquisite nor less animated.

Trust not for freedom to the Franks—

They have a king who buys and sells ;

In native swords, and native ranks,

The only hope of courage dwells ;

But Turkish force, and Latin fraud,

Would break your shields, however broad.

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine !

Our virgin dance beneath the shade—

I see their glorious black eyes shine ;

But gazing on each glowing maid,

My own the burning tear-drop leaves,

To think such breasts must suckle slaves.

Place me on Sunium's marble steep,—

Where nothing, save the waves and I,

May hear our mutual murmurs sweep ;

There, swan-like, let me sing and die :

A land of slaves shall ne'er be mine—

Dash down the cup of Samian wine.

With such feelings though no soldier, it will not excite surprise that Lord Byron should endeavour to assist the Greeks to shake off the yoke of Turkey; and with this view he repaired to Greece, where his personal counsels, his pecuniary aid, and his magnificent talents were all given to her cause.

He devoted himself to the redemption of that lovely and classic land, from the bondage of the infidel, which so long enthralled it. Lord Byron's personal influence reconciled the Greek chiefs, and banished discord from amongst them. He contributed largely from his private fortune to their wants, and his presence on those shores drew the attention of all Europe to the strife of the Christians against the Infidel crescent, and made the very Divan tremble. Encouraged by his name, foreigners of ability were crowding to the scene of contest, and giving to the Greeks the benefits of discipline and experience. The genius of the great poet would have immortalised the efforts of the Christians; and Greece, already distinguished by so many imperishable recollections, would have lived with new glory in his song. The names of Bora-saris and her modern heroes, by whose intrepid courage the bands of the infidel have been so often scattered, would have been joined with the patriots of Platea and Thermopylae; and consecrated by the talents of Lord Byron, have gone down, in kindled memory, to succeeding days; but, unhappily for Greece, their champion has perished in the prime of youth, and in the midst of his exertions in her cause. This melancholy event took place at Missolonghi, on the 19th of April. On the 9th of that month, his Lordship, who had been living very low, exposed himself in a violent rain; the consequence of which was a severe cold, and he was immediately confined to his bed. The low state to which he had been reduced by his abstinence, and probably by some of the remaining effects of his previous illness, made him unwilling—or at any rate he

refused to submit—be bled. It is to be lamented that no one was near his Lordship who had sufficient influence over his mind, or who was himself sufficiently aware of the necessity of the case, to induce him to submit to that remedy, which, in all human probability, would have saved a life so valuable to Greece. The inflammatory action, unchecked, terminated fatally on the 19th of April. His last words, before delirium had seized his powerful mind, were, “I wish it to be known that my last thoughts were given to *my wife, my child, and my sister!*”

Had it pleased the Almighty to spare his valuable life, he would probably have seen his exertions crowned with success, and Greece again triumphant and free; but her liberation must now fall into other hands: but where can a man like Byron be found? In the magnificence of his genius he stood in Europe high above all competition. To Greece he had devoted all his energies, and the whole strength of his great mind. He has been snatched from amongst this interesting people just when they wanted his counsels and his talents most, and their universal regret has shewn how much they valued and respected him. The proclamation of the Provisional Government at Missolonghi, which we subjoin, is an affecting document; it has all the simplicity of real sorrow; there is about it no pomp of words; it speaks of the death of the great poet as “a most calamitous event for all Greece.” “His munificent donations,” it adds, “are before the eyes of every one, and no one amongst us ever ceased, or ever will cease, to consider him with the purest and most grateful sentiments as our benefactor.” In future days, when the Greeks have trodden the crescent in the dust—when the Infidel, so long encamped in Europe, is driven across the Bosphorus, and the city of Constantine again in the Christian’s hands,—events, however vast, which we may live to witness,—the name of Lord Byron will survive in the page of Greek glory, and his mausoleum may repose under the altar of St. Sophia, from whose minarets the Imaum now calls to prayers. Great as is his loss, it is a consolation that freedom in Greece does not perish with him.

The following is a letter from the Greek Prince Maurocordato, announcing Lord Byron’s death:—

Missolonghi, 8th (20th) April, 1824.
 “SIR, AND MY VERY DEAR FRIEND—
 It is with the greatest affliction that I fulfil the duty of giving you the sad news of the death of Lord Byron, after an illness of ten days. Our loss is irreparable,

and it is with justice that we abandon ourselves to inconsolable sorrow. Notwithstanding the difficult circumstances in which I am placed, I shall attempt to perform my duty towards this great man: the eternal gratitude of my country will, perhaps, be the only true tribute to his memory. The Deputies will communicate to you the details of this melancholy event, on which the grief which I feel will not allow me to dwell longer. You will excuse, you will justify, my being overwhelmed with sorrow, and accept the assurance of my devotion, and the high consideration with which I have the honour to be, Sir, your very humble and very obedient servant,

“A. MAUROCORDATO.

“To J. Bowring, Esq.
 “Secretary to the Greek Committee.”

How deeply the loss of Lord Byron is felt in Greece will be seen from the following translation of the proclamation issued by the Greek authorities at Missolonghi to the inhabitants, who were by grief arrested in the celebration of their Easter festivities:—

“The present days of festivity are converted into days of bitter lamentation for all.—

“Lord Noel Byron departed this life to-day, about eleven o’clock in the evening, in consequence of a rheumatic inflammatory fever, which had lasted for ten days.

“During the time of his illness, your general anxiety evinced the profound sorrow that pervaded your hearts. All classes, without distinction of sex or age, oppressed by grief, entirely forgot the days of Easter.

“The death of this illustrious personage is certainly a most calamitous event for all Greece, and still more lamentable for this city, to which he was eminently partial, of which he became a citizen, and of the dangers of which he was determined personally to partake, when circumstances should require it.

“His munificent donations to this community are before the eyes of every one; and no one amongst us ever ceased, or ever will cease, to consider him with the purest and most grateful sentiments, our benefactor.

“Until the dispositions of the National Government regarding this calamitous event be known, by virtue of the decree of the Legislature, No. 314, of date the 15th October, it is ordained—

“1. To-morrow, by sun-rise, thirty-seven minute-guns shall be fired from the batteries of this town, equal to the number of years of the deceased personage.

“2. All Public Offices, including all

Courts of Justice, shall be shut for three following days.

"3. All shops, except those for provisions and medicines, shall also be kept shut; and all sorts of musical instruments, all dances customary in these days, all sorts of festivity and merriment in the public taverns, and every other sort of public amusement, shall cease during the above-named period.

"4. A general mourning shall take place for twenty-one days.

"5. Funeral ceremonies shall be performed in all the churches.

(Signed)

"A. MAUROCORDATO.

"GIORGIA PRAIDI, Secretary.
"Missolonghi, 19th April, 1824."

The Greeks have requested and obtained the heart of Lord Byron, which will be placed in a mausoleum in the country for whose liberation it last beat.

If we except Shakespeare, there is, perhaps, no writer in the English language from whose works an equal number of poetical beauties can be selected as from those of Lord Byron. He excels equally in the sublime and the pathetic. Every theme seemed to suit his genius, and he could vary his style with his subject in a manner, and to an extent, that our literature had before given no example of. In his *Don Juan* he has given a flexibility to our language of which it had never hitherto been thought susceptible. He has shown it capable of rivalling the Italian in the gracefulness of its inflections and the pliancy of its cadence. Some, we know, there are, who could go on poring through the maze of his mellifluous diction with no other aim than to find out a flaw in the sentiment. The numberless passages full of spirit and beauty that cross them in their scrutiny, pass with such objectors for nothing: while their eye follows him into the loftiest regions of poetry, they have no wish but to spy some spot upon his mantle. To such persons we would address ourselves in the mild and forbearing spirit of that admonition which we should all do well to remember—“*Let him that is without sin cast the first stone.*” Thus much we may be permitted to remark in behalf of Lord Byron, that they make a very erroneous estimate of his character who conceive he was capable of withholding his approbation from right principles and virtuous dispositions, wherever they were found. An individual to whom all his friends were attached with the strongest feelings of regard, must have had many private virtues, and those too of no common kind: for the rest, God is the searcher

of hearts, and sees us all as we are. This recollection may check the severity of our sentence where human frailty is the subject. When we bring our fellow-creatures into judgment, our own consciousness may well inspire the best of us with moderation.

That “the paths of glory lead but to the grave,” is a painful lesson to philosophy; it was a lesson with which,—melancholy as it is,—Lord Byron was familiar; but it never for a moment damped his spirit, or depressed his energy. His searching eye saw into the very innermost hearts of those “rulers of the world,” who are struggling to arrest the progress of knowledge in Europe, and to erect again “the standard of ancient night.” All the force of his talents, and all the splendour of his fancy, were put forth to strengthen the love of science and of freedom.

About two years ago Lord Byron wrote his own memoirs, which he presented to Mr. Moore, and Mr. Murray purchased the MS. for 2,000*l.* not to be published until the death of the noble poet: he has since given it up, and, at the wish of some of Lord Byron’s relatives, it is said to have been destroyed. Mr. Moore, in his last poetical production, has written a poem on the subject, entitled, “REFLECTIONS ON LORD BYRON ON READING HIS MEMOIRS WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.” This poem is so apposite that we subjoin it:—

L——D B——’S MEMOIRS, WRITTEN
BY HIMSELF—REFLECTIONS WHEN
ABOUT TO READ THEM.

“ Let me a moment,—ere with fear and hope
Of gloomy, glorious things, these leaves I open—
As one, in fairy tale, to whom the key—
Of some enchanter’s secret hall is given,
Doubts, while he enters, slowly, tremblingly,
If he shall meet with shapes from hell or—heaven—

Let me a moment, think what thousands live
O'er the wide earth this instant, who would give,
Gladly, whole sleepless nights to bend the brow,
Over these precious leaves, as I do now,
How all who know—and where is he unknown?
To what far region have his songs not down,
Like Phœnix’s birds, speaking their master’s
name,

In every language, syllabled by Fame’s voice,
How all, who’ve felt the various spells combin’d
Within the circle of that splendid mind,
Like pow’rs, deriv’d from many a star, and met
Together in some wondrous amulet,
Would burn to know when first the light awoke
In his young soul,—and if the gleams that broke
From that Aurora of his genius, raised
More bliss or pain in those on whom they blaz’d—
Would love to trace th’ unfolding of that power,
Which hath grown ampler, grander, every hour,
And feel, in watching o’er its first advance,

As did the Egyptian traveller*, when he stood
By the young Nile, and fathom’d with his lance
The first small fountains of that mighty flood.

“ They, too, who, ‘mid the scornful thoughts that
dwell

“ In his rich fancy, tingling all its streams,
Bruce.

As if the star of bitterness, which fell
On earth of old, had touched them with its
beams,
Can track a spirit, which, though driv'n to hate,
From Nature's hands came kind, affectionate;
And which, ev'n now, struck as it is with blight,
Comes out, at times, in love's own native light—
How gladly all who've watch'd these struggling
rays
Of a bright, ruin'd spirit through his lays,
Would here inquire, as from his own frank lips,
What desolating grief, what wrongs had driven
That noble nature into cold eclipse—
Like some fair orb that, once a sun in heaven,
And born, not only to surprise, but cheer
With warmth and lustre still within its sphere,
Is now so quench'd, that of its grandeur lasts
Naught, but the wide, cold shadow which it casts!
'Evenful volume! whate'er the change
Of scene and clime—oh! adventures, bold and
strange—
The griefs—the frailties, but too frankly told—
The loves, the feuds thy pages may unfold,
If truth with half so prompt a hand unlocks
His virtue as his failings—we shall find
The record there of friendships, held like rocks,
And enmities like sun-touch'd snow resign'd—
Of fealty, cherish'd without change or chill,
In those who serv'd him, young, and serve him
still—
Of generous aid, giv'n with that noiseless art
Which wakes not pride, to many a wounded
heart—
Of acts—but no—not from himself must aught
Of the bright features of his life be sought.
While they, who court the world, like Milton's
cloud,
"Turn forth their silver lining" on the crowd,
This gifted Being wraps himself in night,
And, keeping all that softens, and adorns,
And gladdens his social nature hid from sight,
Turns but its darkness on a world he scorns.'

* "Did a sable cloud
Turn forth her silver lining on the night?"—
COWPER.

NEWSPAPERS.
We cannot perhaps better close our memoir, than by the following tributes to the memory of this distinguished nobleman, which appeared in the London papers:—

[FROM THE TIMES.]

WITH unfeigned regret we announce to our readers, that Lord Byron is no more. We know not how many of our countrymen may share the feelings with which this news has affected us. There were individuals more to be approved for moral qualities than Lord Byron—to be more safely followed, or more tenderly beloved; but there lives no man on earth whose sudden departure from it, under the circumstances in which that nobleman was cut off, appears to us more calculated to impress the mind with profound and unmingle mourning. Lord Byron was doomed to pay that price which Nature sometimes charges for stupendous intellect, in the gloom of his imagination, and the intractable energy of his passions. Amazing power variously directed, was the mark by which he was distinguished far above all his contemporaries. His dominion was the sublime—it was his

native home; at intervals he plunged into the lower atmosphere for amusement, but his stay was brief. It was his proper nature to ascend; but on the summit of his elevation, his leading passion was to evince his superiority, by launching his melancholy scorn at mankind. That noblest of enterprises, the deliverance of Greece, employed the whole of Lord Byron's latter days—of his pecuniary resources, and of his masculine spirit. It was a cause worthy of a poet and a hero; and it is consolatory to find, that the people for whom he would have devoted his life, seem to have felt the full value of his exertions and his sacrifices. The affectionate veneration in which our deceased countryman was held, appears as well from the private letter of Maurocordato, as from the deep and universal mourning which was observed at Missolonghi from the hour at which his death was made public. Had he but died in battle against slaves and infidels, for a Christian people struggling to be free, his own fame would have received its full consummation, and his wishes, as well understood, their complete fulfilment.

[FROM THE MORNING CHRONICLE.]

THUS has perished, in the flower of his age, in the noblest of causes, one of the greatest poets England ever produced. His death, at this moment, is, no doubt, a severe misfortune to the struggling people for whom he has so generously devoted himself. His character we shall not attempt to draw. He had virtues, and he had failings; the latter were, in a great measure, the result of the means of indulgence which were placed within his reach at so early a period of his life.

"Give me neither poverty nor riches," said an inspired writer, and certainly it may be said that the gift of riches is an unfortunate one for the possessor. The aim which men, who are not born to wealth, have constantly before them, gives a relish to existence to which the hereditarily opulent must ever be strangers. Gratifications of every kind soon lose their attraction, the game of life is played without interest, for that which can be obtained without effort is never highly prized. It is fortunate for the great when they can escape from themselves into some pursuit, which, by firing their ambition, gives a stimulus to their active powers. We rejoiced to see Lord Byron engaged in a cause which afforded such motives for exertions, and we anticipated from him many days of glory. But it has been otherwise decreed.

[FROM THE MORNING HERALD.]

[FROM THE BRITISH PRESS.]

A DEEPLY mournful sensation was excited by the intelligence of the death of Lord Byron. Thus has the poetical literature of England lost one of its brightest ornaments, and the age decidedly its finest genius. Much of the notice which he attracted, and the ascendancy which he obtained, is no doubt attributable to certain singularities in his temper and character, and even in the events of his life. But the vulgar only were swayed by his eccentricity. The prodigious splendour of his genius won admiration from the liberal, the learned, and the wise. There is scarcely any instance of poetical power of the first order displayed under such a variety of forms. His early poems certainly gave no promise of his future greatness. But their febleness was, perhaps, a happy circumstance—it provoked a memorable criticism, which, in its turn, met with a severer and more memorable retaliation. Lord Byron vented his resentment in the satire.—In the poem of *Childe Harold*, which soon followed, he vindicated the supremacy of his genius. It is in this poem, and the shorter poems, turning chiefly upon oriental scenes and circumstances, that Lord Byron is distinctively himself. He displayed, it is true, astonishing versatility as he advanced. He entered the domain of Italian and of the more modern German poetry—not as an imitator, but as a rival. It is hardly safe or discreet to speak of *Don Juan*, that truant offspring of Lord Byron's muse. It may be said, however, that with all its sing, the copiousness and flexibility of the English language were never before so triumphantly approved—that the same compass of talent—“the grave, the gay, the great, the small,” comic force, humour, metaphysics, and observation, boundless fancy and ethereal beauty, and curious knowledge, curiously applied, have never been blended with the same felicity in any other poem. It would be easy to dwell upon some vices of taste—for it is with those only that we have to do—but they are not to be thought of at a moment when England has lost her first poet, not yet arrived at the meridian of his life—perhaps not even of his genius—one who might yet have atoned to his country and to literature for the errors of his youth, by producing works which would place his name uncontestedly still nearer those of Milton and Shakespeare, by no longer affording a pretext to cant and scowl, and interested sycophany.

THE death of Lord Byron, is an event which we little expected to record. It falls on the public ear like a shock of deep, private misfortune. He has sunk to rest in the prime of his days, and in the zenith of his fame; he has left the world when his services could ill be spared, and we may add with truth, when they cannot be supplied. A more calamitous event could not have happened to Greece; all his aid, personal and pecuniary—all the energies of his body and of his mind, were put forth for the restoration of her freedom; to her cause his loss is irreparable. Lord Byron's genius was of the very first order: he was one of those characters from whose existence new eras date their commencement: that fresh career of society which is beginning in Europe wanted the stimulus of a mind like his, to carry it onward to happiness and to glory: he was no lover of revolutions; he looked only to the improvement of which the political condition of mankind was capable, by the diffusion of knowledge, and the just estimate of independence. It was with these views that he aided Greece to the utmost of his means, to rescue herself from the claims of her oppressor, and rise again to life and liberty. We are not yet sufficiently recovered from the painful feelings with which the sudden intelligence of his death has impressed us, to enter into any detail of observation on his genius as a poet, or his character as a man. Now that his days are numbered, the world will do justice to both.

[FROM THE STAR.]

It is with much regret we have to announce the death of that wayward, but highly-gifted genius, Lord Byron, which took place at Missolonghi, on the 19th ultimo. “There is a tear for all that die,” as this noble poet observes in his elegy on the death of one of his friends; and whatever may have been his errors, he must be a rigid moralist indeed, who does not breathe a sigh for the fate of a poet, who, possessing talents of a transcendent nature, has perished in devoting them to the emancipation of Greece—for in this cause he has fallen, and deeply indeed will his loss be felt.

Although it would be impossible to defend some of the recent publications of Lord Byron, yet to us his failings always rather appeared those of education, and a yielding to the immediate society in which he mingled, than errors of the heart; and there are many acts of his, which not only do honour to his rank in life, but to humanity. His memory will, however,

live in his works, and in his exertions in the cause of Greece, when his failings will be forgotten.

[FROM THE GLOBE AND TRAVELLER.]

ENGLAND is thus deprived of the man to whom even those who have felt the most violent enmity towards some of his recent writings have not denied the title of the first poet of the age. His death is the more melancholy at a time when he devoted himself to a cause in which, in common with all generous minds, he felt the deepest sympathy—a cause of which it is enough to say, that it would have been worthy of his muse. The character of Lord Byron has already been the subject of very strict and not very friendly investigation; but it will be acknowledged that if he fell into some of those errors which those who have too early an opportunity of gratifying all their wishes can scarcely escape from: and if in his mind there was occasionally something of that bitterness which arises in the very fountain of the Grace, he is now entitled to be remembered for the great qualities in which he has excelled all men of his age and rank—not for the failings which he has shared with so many of them. His brilliant talents, and his careful cultivation of them, his benevolent heart, his aspirations for the happiness and liberty of mankind; and finally, his noble devotedness in the noblest struggle which this age has witnessed, will cause him to be numbered among the great men of whose memory England is proud, and whose premature loss it has been her fate to lament.

[FROM THE EXAMINER.]

How strong and how universal is the melancholy sensation produced by the death of a man of genius! Every reader of his immortal writings is, at the least, an acquaintance—often an ardent and sympathizing friend. The favourite passages imprinted on the memory recur at such a moment, and touchingly remind us, that we have lost one who had been a companion in so many interesting hours, and had enriched our minds with so many beautiful and ennobling associations. Throughout Great Britain, North America, and our colonial dominions, will this event produce a sensation not weakened by distance or locality; and in a less degree in France, Germany, and all the more enlightened countries of Europe, to which the poet's genius had been communicated by translations. In Greece, indeed, the shock is probably more felt than even in England. Admiration and gratitude had combined to

make Lord Byron, when present there, the object of a sort of personal affection; and his death is to the Greeks a sudden blighting of political hopes, a dark cloud overshadowing their glorious prospects, the loss of valuable substantive aid, and the more sensible loss of the lustre which his great name shed upon their cause.

Cut off in the prime of life, and in the very summer of his mental power, his death is on that account rendered additionally painful in itself; yet he certainly could not have died under circumstances more favourable to his fame. He had already established a reputation as the great poetical ornament of his age; and he had acquired, in spite of the prejudices of rank and wealth, that honour and esteem from mankind, which are ensured by a strong sensibility to their wrongs, and a vivid indignation against their oppressors. He was pursuing a career of glory, labouring hand and heart in the purest cause of modern times, on the most illustrious soil in the world. His celebrity as a patriot was bidding fair to rival his reputation as a poet—rare conjunction of honours! He had the fortune, which he thought Napoleon's reputation so much wanted, when he reproached him with not dying in the field of battle.

VERSES

ON THE DEATH OF LORD BYRON.

THYSELF hadst said, that in the cloudy clime
Which gave thee birth, thou willing wouldst
not die;

The wish thus breath'd in thy prophetic rhyme,
Has granted been by answ'ring destiny.

Greece saw thee die—Greece fully made thine
own—

By all the ties thy genii could impose;
Greece claim'd thee living as her favorite son,
And dead, lamented thee with a nation's woes.

Oh! well Childe Harold has his sense restored—
And well his wayward pilgrimage has clos'd;
In arms, for liberty, by Greece adored,
He died, to Moslem tyranny oppos'd.

Oh, had his sword but drakn the oppressor's
blood;

His dying voice but rais'd the victor's cry;
The pilgrim's glorious death would then have
stood

A crowning, worthy of his poetry.

A HARROW SCHOOL-FELLOW
OF LORD BYRON.

* * A Portrait of Lord Byron, from an approved likeness, is in the hands of an artist, and as soon as it can be engraved on steel, will be presented gratis to the readers of the Mirror.

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